

STATE OF WOMEN IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT SRI LANKA

1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY.

1.1 Socio-economic profile

1.1.1 The geography

Sri Lanka¹ is an island situated in the Indian Ocean close to the southern tip of the Indian Peninsula. The total area of the country is 65,610 square kilometres. The country has a compact land area except for Mannar, which is an island in the north-west, the Jaffna peninsula in the north and a few small islands close to the peninsula. In the central part of the country is a mountainous area, the elevation of which ranges between 900 and 2100 metres approximately. The average annual rainfall varies from below 1,000mm in the small arid regions to 5000mm on the south-western slopes of the central hilly area.

1.1.2 Demography

1.1.2.1. Size of population:

The estimated population for 1996 was 18.1 million as shown in Table 1. This is an increase of about 11 million over the last 50 years. The population for 2001 has been estimated at 19 million and for 2015 at 21.9 million.

A high rate of growth of the population was witnessed in the 1950s and the 1960s (2.8 percent in 1953 and 2.7 percent in 1963) due to the decreasing rate of mortality and high birth rate. The increase in the growth during this period was such that it almost doubled between the years 1946 (6.7 million) and 1971 (12.7 million). However the rate of growth has declined during the last two decades and currently it stands at around 1.0 percent.

1.1.2.2. Density of population and urbanization:

Sri Lanka is considered to be one of the most densely populated countries in the world. In 1991 the density was 292 persons per square kilometer and according to estimates it will exceed 310 by the year 2005. The population is concentrated mostly in the western and central parts of the country. However, migration of the rural population to the urban areas has been slower than in most developing countries. An increase of the urban population from 15 percent of the total population in 1946 to 22.5 percent in 1971 was witnessed. The shift has been contained thereafter.

¹ The name of the country was changed from Ceylon to Sri Lanka in 1972.

Implementation of large scale colonization schemes in rural areas, location of industries and other development projects in remote areas, increased land prices and higher cost of living in urban areas have contributed to this trend. Population in some of the major cities in the country is shown in Table 2.

Table 1**Population**

Year	Population			Annual Average Growth Rate %	Population Density (Nos. per sq. km.)	Level of Urbanization (As % of Total Population)
	Female '000	Male '000	Total '000			
1946 ^A	3,125	3,532	6,657	1.4	103	N.A.
1953 ^A	3,829	4,269	8,098	2.8	125	15.3
1963 ^A	5,083	5,499	10,582	2.7	163	19.0
1971 ^A	6,159	6,531	12,690	2.2	196	22.4
1981 ^A	7,278	7,568	14,846	1.7	232	21.5
1991 ^B	8,523	8,736	17,259	1.4	267	N.A.
1996 ^B	8,971	9,141	18,112	1.2	292	N.A.
2001 ^B	9,442	9,574	19,016	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

^A Census years. Since 1871 censuses were carried out regularly till 1981

Source : Central Bank of Sri Lanka
Department of Census and Statistics

^B Estimated

N.A.-Not available.

1.1.3 Economy

Sri Lanka has a liberalized, market oriented economy brought about through structural reforms and a privatization program.

The gross domestic product (GDP) of the country for 1999 was Rs.1111 billion at current market prices. This indicated a per capita income of US\$ 829 on the basis of an estimated mid-year population of 19 million people. The rate of growth of the GDP in real terms in 1999 was 4.3 percent and this growth is considered to be satisfactory, although the long run annual average growth rate was around 5 percent, in view of the current security difficulties faced by the country. The annual average depreciation of the rupee against the dollar in 1999 was 8.2 percent. The unemployment rate has continued to decline as a result of growth of employment in the private sector. Nevertheless, during the first three quarters of 1999 unemployment stood at 8.8 percent of the labour force.

Table 2
Population in Large Cities

City		1946	1953	1963	1971	1981
Colombo ^A	Female	132,581	167,249	215,298	245,085	260,434
	Male	229,483	258,878	296,346	317,335	327,213
	Total	362,074	426,127	511,644	562,420	587,647
Dehiwala- ^A Mt.Lavinia	Female	26,475	35,923	52,142	73,500	85,619
	Male	30,406	42,290	58,792	80,693	87,910
	Total	56,881	78,213	110,934	154,193	173,529
Moratuwa ^A	Female	24,600	29,162	38,188	47,224	67,282
	Male	26,098	31,053	39,645	49,041	67,544
	Total	50,698	60,215	77,833	96,265	134,826
Jaffna	Female	29,060	35,903	44,997	52,191	58,416
	Male	33,483	41,278	49,673	54,993	59,808
	Total	62,543	77,181	94,670	107,184	118,224
Kotte ^A	Female	18,172	25,229	34,940	44,899	49,094
	Male	22,046	29,152	38,384	48,787	51,948
	Total	40,218	54,381	73,324	93,686	101,042
Kandy	Female	21,221	24,276	30,112	42,352	46,141
	Male	30,045	32,924	38,090	50,951	51,731
	Total	51,266	57,200	68,202	93,303	97,872
Galle	Female	23,880	26,977	31,967	34,608	38,164
	Male	25,129	28,871	33,264	36,658	38,699
	Total	48,009	55,848	65,231	71,266	76,863

^A Adjacent cities

Source: Department of Census and Statistics

The structure of the economy in 1999 as revealed by the sectoral composition of the economy is given in Table 3 below.

The agricultural sector, which has contributed about 21 percent to the GDP in 1999, as shown in Table 3 consists mainly of the three plantation crops of tea, rubber and coconut and also of paddy. Other export crops as coffee, cinnamon,

cloves, cardamom, nutmeg and citronella, pulses, chilies, fish, poultry and meat are some of the other components of the agricultural sector.

Table 3

Sectoral Composition of GDP

	%
• Agriculture forestry and fishing	20.7
• Mining and quarrying	1.8
• Manufacturing	16.4
• Construction	7.6
• Electricity, gas, water and sanitary services	1.5
• Transport, storage and communication	11.4
• Wholesale and retail trade	21.2
• Banking, insurance and real estate	8.1
• Ownership of dwellings	1.8
• Public Administration	5.3
• Services (n.e.s)	4.1
	<hr/>
GDP	100.0
Net factor income from abroad	-1.8
GNP	<hr/> 98.2

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka

The manufacturing sector which has contributed 16.4 percent to the GDP in 1999 consists of processing of tea, rubber and coconut, apparels, processed diamonds, plastics, machinery, processed fruit, footwear, pharmaceuticals, cement and building materials among other things.

1.1.4 Health

Sri Lanka has achieved much in the sphere of the health of the population during the last fifty years. The present high levels have been reached through an island-wide network of medical institutions and public health programs. All aspects of the health needs of the people are met free by the public health services provided by the government. There has also been a steady increase in the provision of health services by the private sector since the latter part of the 1980s.

1.1.4.1. Infant and maternal mortality and the total death rate:

The mortality rate of infants under 1 year of age and the maternal mortality rate have declined steeply since 1946. Infant mortality, which stood at 141 per 1000 births in 1946, fell to 17 in 1997, while maternal mortality, which was 16.5 per 1000 live births in 1946 dropped to 0.2 in 1996. The total death rate declined from 20.3 per 1000 population in 1946 to 6.1 in 1997.

This steep decline in death rates was the result of several steps taken by the government. Health campaigns such as those taken against malaria and

tuberculosis, strengthening of the family health services, efforts to control diarrhoea and respiratory diseases which cause infant morbidity and mortality, expanded immunization programs against diseases such as polio and pertusis and provision of public health facilities through free medical and hospital care were the main factors that contributed to it.

1.1.4.2. Fertility and birth rate:

The birthrate, which was 38.4 per 1000 in 1946, fell to 18.6 in 1996 and the total fertility rate from 5.3 in 1952-1954 to 2.1 in 1997.

Table 4

Vital Statistics

Year	Birth Rate (per 1000 live births)	Death Rate (per 1000 live births)	Maternal Mortality (per 1000 live births)	Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	
				Female	Male
1946	38.4	20.3	8.3 (In 1948)	41.6	43.9
1955	37.3	11.0	4.1	57.5 (In 1953)	58.8 (In 1953)
1963	34.1	8.5	2.4	61.4 (In 1962)	61.9 (In 1962)
1971	30.4	7.7	1.4	67.1	64.2
1981	28.2	5.9	0.6	72.1	67.7
1991	21.6	5.5	0.4	74.2 (1991/1996)	69.5 (1991/1996)
1997	18.6 (In 1996)	6.1	0.2 (In 1996)	75.4 (1996/2001)	70.7 (1996/2001)

Source: Central Bank of Sri Lanka
Dept. of Census & Statistics

Table 4A

Vital Statistics

Year	Infant Mortality (per 1000 live birth)		
	Female	Male	Average
1971	40.7	48.8	44.8
1981	27.4	31.6	29.6
1986	21.0	25.4	23.2
1991	15.4	19.9	17.7
1992	15.7	20.0	17.9
1993	14.6	17.9	16.3
1994	15.2	18.5	16.9
1995	15.1	17.9	16.5
1996	18.8	17.3	15.6

Source: Registrar General's Department

These results were mainly due to the implementation of family planning activities such as the steady increase of family planning clinics and development of various programs by the government for provision of information and education to the public. In addition, training of medical and public health personnel was systematically undertaken. Family planning was recognized as a national program and its activities were integrated with maternal and child health programs of the government. The fertility decline was also the result of an increase in the age of marriage of females. It increased from 20.9 years in 1953 to 28 years (projected) in the 1995-2000 period.

1.1.4.3. Life expectancy at birth:

Life expectancy at birth stood at 42.2 years in 1942. This rose to 73.1 years by 1997. In the earlier years life expectancy for females was lower than for males. In 1953 it was 57.5 and 58.5 years respectively. This position reversed in 1963, and in 1991 it was 74.2 and 69.5 years respectively. The projected figures for 2000-2005 are 76.3 years for females and 71.6 years for males.

1.1.5. **Education and Literacy:**

In Sri Lanka all students are provided with free education including education at university level. This scheme was introduced in 1945. Prior to it what existed was a dual system of fee levying English schools and non-fee levying Sinhala and Tamil schools. As the government paid more attention to English education then, the schools in rural areas, which were always vernacular schools, were neglected. After independence in 1948, several policy reforms were introduced by the government, with a view to ensure better enrolment levels and improve the quality of education. A free mid-day meal program² was in existence at the time and issue of free school books and free school uniforms was introduced in 1980 and 1993 respectively. Improvement of schemes for the recruitment of teachers, provision of pre-service training to teacher-recruits, in-service training and restructuring of curricula have been some of the measures taken to better the quality of education.

Facilities provided for education have shown a large increase during the last 50 years. The number of government schools, which stood at 3091 in 1948 increased to 10280 in 1996. The number of teachers increased six-fold, from 32704 to 195203 during this period. Where the university education is concerned, the number of students increased from 1611 to 33948 and the number of teachers from 121 to 2747 between 1947 and 1996. The expenditure on public education, as a percentage of the GNP, for the years 1993-96 averaged 3.4.

These developments resulted in achieving an increase in the enrolment ratio from 66 percent in 1950 to 90 percent in 1996 and a literacy ratio of 90.7 by 1997. Table 5 gives information on enrolment at primary, secondary and tertiary levels during the period between 1945 and 1998.

² This was discontinued in 1996

Table 5

Student Enrolment

Year	Primary Level		Secondary Level		Tertiary Level		Total		
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Total
1945	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	372,402	494,907	867,309
1953	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	711,963	880,590	1,592,553
1963	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,132,487	1,328,887	2,461,374
1973	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	2,539,435
1977	712,407	779,740	440,113	446,302	46,354	37,231	1,198,874	1,263,273	2,462,147
1983	1,022,647	1,098,510	619,471	589,726	77,946	52,075	1,720,064	1,740,311	3,460,375
1988	991,433	1,063,480	881,823	857,116	97,919	71,221	1,971,175	1,991,817	3,962,992
1993	955,283	1,026,018	1,011,362	989,090	110,637	80,507	2,077,282	2,095,615	4,172,897
1998	873,911	928,022	1,044,960	1,025,076	151,893	112,168	2,070,764	2,065,266	4,136,030

Source: Ministry of Education
and Higher Education

1.1.6. Labour force participation:

Labour force participation of men, as shown in Table 6, increased from 58 percent in 1946 to 66 percent and that of women from 18.2 percent to 31.6 percent during the period.

Table 6

Labour Force

Year	Labour Force('000)			Participation Rate(%)		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
1946	570	2041	2611	18.2	57.8	39.2
1953	724	2268	2993	18.9	53.1	37.0
1963	722	2742	3464	14.2	49.8	32.7
1973	1293	3267	4560	20.2	48.5	34.4
1981	1280	3736	5016	17.1	49.4	33.8
1991 ^A	2090	3787	5877	34.8	64.4	49.8
1996 ^A	2044	4201	6245	31.6	65.9	48.7

^A - Excludes Northern and Eastern provinces

Source : Central Bank of Sri Lanka
Department of Census and Statistics.

1.2 Politics and Governance

1.2.1 Political and Government Structure

1.2.1.1. Form of government and the constitution

Sri Lanka is a unitary state with a democratic and multiparty system. For administrative purposes the country has been divided into 9 provinces (out of which 2 have been later amalgamated for the purpose of establishing one Provincial Council) and 25 Districts.

The present Constitution is the third since the country became independent from British rule with the granting of Dominion status in 1948. It was adopted in 1978 and provides for an elected Executive President and a unicameral legislature. It replaced the first-past-the-post electoral system, which existed till then, with proportional representation. This system thus, is a combination of Presidential and Parliamentary systems.

1.2.1.2. President

The President whose term is 6 years is elected direct by the people and is the head of state, head of the executive and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. She/he, though not a Member of Parliament, has the power to make the statement of government policy at the commencement of each Parliamentary Session, to preside at ceremonial sittings of Parliament and send messages to Parliament.

1.2.1.3. Parliament

The term of office of the Parliament is 6 years and it consists of 225 members, 196 of whom are elected by the people to represent the several electoral districts. The balance 29 seats are apportioned among the political parties or independent groups contesting the elections according to the proportion of votes polled by them. These seats are filled by nominations made by such political parties or groups.

1.2.1.4. Prime Minister and the Cabinet

The President appoints as Prime Minister, the Member of Parliament who in her/his opinion is most likely to command the confidence of the Parliament. The Cabinet is appointed from among the Members of Parliament, by the President, in consultation with the Prime Minister.

1.2.1.5. Judiciary

The judicial power in the country is exercised by the Parliament through a system of courts and other institutions. However, the judicial power of the Parliament

is only for sovereignty purposes and the courts and other institutions maintain judicial independence free from outside interference.

1.2.1.6. Structure at sub-national level

At sub-national level are 8 Provincial Councils elected by the people. The term of office of a Provincial Council is 5 years. They were established by an amendment effected to the Constitution in 1987 for sharing power between the central government and the provinces. The subjects and functions that come under the central government, the Provincial Councils and those that are concurrent are specified in 3 lists termed as the Reserved List, Provincial Council List and the Concurrent List. Each Provincial Council has a Governor appointed by the President and responsible for execution of policies and statutes of the Provincial Council through a Board of Ministers headed by a Chief Minister and consisting of not more than four other Ministers. The Chief Minister is appointed by the Governor and the other Ministers by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister.

1.2.1.7. Structure at local level

At the local level there are three types of local authorities -Municipal Councils, Urban Councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas-which are elected by the people. Their term of office is 4 years. Currently there are 14 Municipal Councils, 37 Urban Councils and 258 Pradeshiya Sabhas. In general, Municipal Councils are established for cities and large towns, Urban Councils for less urbanized areas and Pradeshiya Sabhas for rural areas. Although it is usually considered that Municipal Councils and Urban Councils are “urban” local authorities while Pradeshiya Sabhas are “rural” ones, there is no formal definition of “rural” and “urban”³

1.2.2 Civil/Administrative service

The civil/administrative service of the country can be classified mainly into 2 categories –the National Public Service and the Provincial Public Service. The former is controlled nationally and the latter sub-nationally.

The National Public Service consists of 2 groups. The first consists of all public officers required by the Constitution or other written law, to be appointed by the President. High level officials such as the Secretaries to Ministries belong to this category. The second group consists of other public officers. Their appointment, transfer, dismissal and disciplinary control is vested in the Cabinet of Ministers. Except in the case of Heads of Departments, the Cabinet is empowered to delegate these powers to the Public Service Commission and the Cabinet has done so.

The National Public Service is classified into 2 segments as the Central Services and the All Island Services. The Central Services include staff-grades and non-staff grades in Ministries and Departments which handle functions in the Reserved List and central functions in the Concurrent List mentioned earlier. They do not serve

³ Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Local Government Reforms-Sessional Paper No.1 of 1999-p39

under Provincial Councils. The All Island Services include officers of certain specified Services and they serve in staff level positions in Ministries and Departments of the centre as well as in the Provincial Service. They should serve the Provincial Public Service for periods depending on the exigencies of service, staffing needs and related factors by agreement with the appointing authority of the Provincial Public Service Commission concerned. On expiry of such periods of service the members of the All Island Services will revert to the Central Departmental and Ministry cadres.

In the case of the Provincial Public Service the appointment, transfer, dismissal and disciplinary control of officers is vested in the Governor of each Province. These powers, in all the 8 Provincial Councils, have been delegated by the Governors, under the law, to Provincial Public Service Commissions.

1.2.3 Extent of Political Freedom and Participation

1.2.3.1. Political Parties

Since independence elections have been contested by political parties as well as by independent candidates. At present, there are 41 political parties registered with the Commissioner of Elections. At the Parliamentary Elections in 1994, the 196 elected seats were contested by 13 political parties and a number of independent groups. Of the candidates, 186 were returned from 6 political parties and the balance 10 from among independent candidates.

1.2.3.2. Freedom of expression and the media

The constitution guarantees to every citizen, as a fundamental right, the freedom of speech and expression including publication, assembly and association subject to such restrictions as may be prescribed by the law in the interest of racial and religious harmony or in relation to Parliamentary privilege, contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence. Control of publications, meetings and such like can only be effected by the President by proclamation made in terms of the provisions of the Public Security Ordinance when a state of public emergency is imminent or exists.

The country enjoys a free media, both printed and electronic, and freedom of assembly and expression.

1.2.3.3. Frequency and regularity of elections

The law provides that the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, as shown earlier, should be held every 6 years. The term of office of a Provincial Council is 5 years. In the case of local authorities the term is 4 years subject to the provision that the minister in charge of the subject of local government may, under certain circumstances, extend the period for a further period of one year. Thus a voter can participate in elections and use his vote at least on 4 occasions within a period of six

years in Presidential, Parliamentary, Provincial Council and local government elections.

Voter participation in elections in Sri Lanka has been high. Voter turn-out during the last 40 years, in Parliamentary and Presidential elections has been over 70 percent, except in 1988 and 1989 when there was an unsatisfactory security situation, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7
Voter Participation

Year Election held	Type of Election	Total No. of Registered Voters	Total Polled	Percentage
1947	Parliamentary	3,048,145	1,710,150	56.1
1952	-Do-	2,990,912	2,114,615	70.7
1956	-Do-	3,464,159	2,391,538	69.0
1960 March	-Do-	3,724,507	2,889,282	77.6
1960 July	-Do-	3,724,507	2,827,075	75.9
1965	-Do-	4,710,887	3,821,918	81.1
1970	-Do-	5,508,028	4,672,656	84.8
1977	-Do-	7,160,706	6,276,606	87.6
1988	Presidential	9,374,164	5,186,223	55.3
1989	Parliamentary	9,374,164	5,962,031	63.6
1994	-Do-	10,945,065	8,344,101	76.2
1994	Presidential	10,945,065	7,713,232	70.5

Source : Statistical Abstracts – Department of Census and Statistics.
Goonerathne, W.G. and Karunaratne, R.S., 1996, Tenth Parliament
(Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd.)

1.2.3.4. Franchise

All citizens of the country over 18 years of age, except those found or declared to be of unsound mind and those who are disqualified in terms of certain provisions relating to persons convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment or found guilty of certain offences, are qualified to be electors at any election.

Voting at elections is optional and not mandatory.

1.2.4 **Electoral system at national, sub-national and local levels**

1.2.4.1. Electoral system - National level

Presidential and Parliamentary elections are the ones held nationally in Sri Lanka.

In Presidential elections, the entire country becomes the electorate and a voter is entitled to one vote. To be declared elected, a candidate is required to secure more than 50 percent of the total number of valid votes polled.

In Parliamentary elections, the country is divided into 22 electoral districts. Twenty of these correspond to 20 of the 25 administrative districts referred to earlier. The balance 5 administrative districts form two electoral districts - one formed by merging two administrative districts and the other formed by merging the remaining 3 administrative districts. Every person qualified to be an elector is qualified to be elected as a Member of Parliament. As already stated, the Parliamentary elections are held on the principles of proportional representation and under this system, each political party or independent group contesting an election should submit a list containing the names of candidates. Each list should contain three names more than the number of members⁴ to be elected to each electorate. While the voter is entitled to one vote, which he has to cast for the political party or the group of his choice, he is also entitled to mark up to 3 preferences against the names of three candidates of the party or the group he votes for.

The number of members elected from each party or group is reckoned on the basis of the proportion of votes received by it in the entire electorate. A party or group that receives less than one-twentieth of the total number of votes cast, does not secure any seat. When a vacancy occurs after the elections, by-elections are not held. Instead, the Commissioner of Elections is empowered to appoint the candidate, of the same political party or group, who received the next highest number of preferences, to fill the vacancy

1.2.4.2. Electoral system - Sub-National level

At sub-national level, for Provincial Council elections, each of the Districts within a Province is deemed to be an electorate. While the number of members that will constitute a Provincial Council is specified by the President having regard to the area and the population of each electorate, allocation of the number of members to be elected from each electorate is determined by the Commissioner of Election.

The procedure applicable to the conduct of elections is governed by the same principles relating to proportional representation as in the case of Parliamentary Elections.

1.2.4.3. Electoral system - Local level

Elections to Municipal Councils, Urban Councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas, referred to in paragraph 1.2.1.7 above, are conducted at this level. In these elections a ward system is not followed and the total local area becomes the electorate. Where the number of members of local authorities is concerned, the Minister in

⁴ The number of members is determined on a formula based on the number of electors.

charge of the subject of local government prescribes it and in so doing he is required to take into consideration the land area and the population of the local authority.

The system followed in electing members to these bodies is governed by the same principles relating to proportional representation.

1.2.4.4. Appointment of Chairperson, Mayor etc. at sub-national level and local levels.

The law provides that each Provincial Council should have, apart from the Board of Ministers referred to above, a Chairman and a Vice Chairman elected from among the members of the Provincial Council by majority vote.

However, for the position of the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor of Municipal Councils and the Chairman and the Vice Chairman in the case of Urban Councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas, nominations are made from among members by the party or the independent group that secures the highest number of seats and their appointments are made by the Commissioner of Elections.

1.2.4.5. Term and Age limits.

In the case of the President, no person who has been twice elected to office is qualified to be elected again. Term limits do not exist for any other elected office.

Any person who is qualified to be an elector is entitled to seek any elected office and thus there are no age limits. Yet in elections to local authorities, the law requires that at least 40 percent of the candidates in nomination lists are required to be between 18 and 35 years of age. This is to provide for youth representation in local administration.

1.2.5 Suffrage for women in central and local government elections

Before 1931, only males had the right to vote and that too on certain qualifications relating to property, education and race. The Donoughmore Constitution of 1931, a landmark in the history of Constitutional Reforms during the period of Colonial Rule, introduced universal adult suffrage.

In that year, women thus became entitled to vote and to be elected to the State Council which was the national legislature, and to the Municipal Councils and Urban Councils; however, they did not have the right to vote or be elected to Town Councils and to Village Committees (which existed then). This disability too was removed in 1938 and since then women have enjoyed the same political rights as men.

Table 8
Voting at Sub-national and Urban Local Elections

Year Elections Held	Type of Council	Existing No. of Councils	No. of Councils for which Elections Held	Registered No. of Voters	Total Polled	Percentage Polled
1997	Municipal	14	12	957158	697612	72.9
1997	Urban	37	31	400455	310810	77.6
1999 April	Provincial	8	5	7127455	5000143	70.2

Source: Department of Census and Statistics.

1.3 Participation and representation of women in politics

1.3.1 Voting at elections

The electoral registers, though they indicate the sex of eligible voters, do not give their total numbers by sex. However, from a random examination of the registers, it can be estimated that about 48 percent of the eligible voters are females and 52 percent males. Sex disaggregated statistics of those who cast the vote too are not available. Yet an idea about the extent of female participation in elections can be formed from the percentages of votes cast in some of the past elections. For instance as shown in Table 7, the percentage of votes polled in the 1970 and 1977 elections were 84.8 and 87.6 respectively⁵. On the basis that the proportion of eligible female voters was 48 percent and assuming an unlikely situation that all eligible male voters cast their vote, the proportion of females that cast the vote will be around 70 percent. Observations at polling stations and opinions expressed by election officials and representatives of candidates have revealed that the turn out of female and male voters has been almost equal.

1.3.2 Women in the legislative branch and decision-making levels

1.3.2.1 National Level

A few high positions at decision-making level are held by women. Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga is the Executive President of the country. She was first elected to this office in 1994 and was re-elected for a second term in 1999. She also holds the portfolio of Finance. Mrs. Sirimavo R.D. Bandaranaike became the Prime Minister of the country in 1960 and was the first woman Prime Minister in the world. She held this position on several occasions for a total period of 18 years and resigned recently. Two other women also hold ministerial positions and the number of female Deputy Ministers is three. Their subjects include women's affairs, social services, health, trade and food.

⁵ Polling at the 1988 and 1989 elections were low due to the unsatisfactory security situation that prevailed in the country at the time.

Table 9
Representation of Women in Parliament

Seats in Parliament		Years in which Parliamentary Term Commenced									
		1947	1952	1956	1960 March	1960 July	1965	1970	1977	1989	1994
No. of Seats in Parliament	For Elected M.P.s	95	95	95	151	151	151	151	168	196	196
	For Nominated M.P.s	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	-	29	29
	Total	101	101	101	157	157	157	157	168	225	225
No. of Female M.P.s (Includes those elected/appointed mid-term)	No. Elected	3	2	4	2	3	6	6	6	11	10
	No. Nominated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
	Total	3	2	4	2	3	6	6	6	12	12
Total No. of Male M.P.s (Elected and Nominated)		98	99	97	155	154	151	151	159	213	213
No. of Female M.P.s as a % of	Elected M.P.s	3.2	2.1	4.2	1.3	2.0	4.0	4.0	3.6	5.6	5.1
	Nominated M.P.s	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.4	6.8
	Total No. of M.P.s	3.2	2.0	4.0	1.3	1.9	3.8	3.8	3.6	5.3	5.3

Source: Goonerathne, W.G. and Karunaratne, R.S., 1996, Tenth Parliament
(Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd.)

As shown in Table 9 the total number of women members in the Parliament at present is 11 elected and 1 nominated. Though the proportion is not very significant, over the years there has been an increase in the number of women entering Parliament. A notable feature is that a majority of them are from rural and semi-urban areas of the country. Entry, to Parliament, of politicians from rural areas was a shift that started with the Parliamentary Elections of 1956, but the change was slow in the case of women.

1.3.2.2 Sub-National level

Table 10
Women's Representation at Sub-National and Urban Local Levels
Position as at 30.6.2000

Type of Council	No. of Councils	No. of Representatives			Females as a % of Total
		Female	Male	Total	
Provincial Councils	7 ^A	15	364	379	4.0
Municipal Councils	14	7	294	301	2.3
Urban Councils	37	5	358	363	1.4

^A - Excludes North-East Provincial Council

Source: Provincial, Municipal and Urban Councils

Since the setting up of the Provincial Councils (by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution in 1987 and by an Act of Parliament in 1988) three elections have been held in 1989, 1993 and 1999. In the short history of the Provincial Council system, two women have held the position of Chief Minister. As shown in Table 10, of a total of 379 representatives in Provincial Councils as at 30.6.2000, only 15 were females. This is a mere 4 percent of the total.

Table 11
Higher Posts in the Legislative Branch at National and Sub-national Levels
Position as at 30.6.2000

Level	Position	Number			Females as a % of Total
		Female	Male	Total	
National (Parliament)	Minister	2 ^A	28	30	6.7
	Deputy Minister	3	39	42	7.1
	Committee Chairperson	1	4	5	20
Sub-national (Provincial Councils)	Provincial Governor	-	8	8	-
	Chief Minister	-	7	7 ^B	-
	Other Provincial Ministers	1	34	35 ^B	2.9
	Chairperson of Provincial Councils	-	7	7 ^B	-
	Vice-Chairperson of Provincial Councils	-	7	7	-
	Chairperson of Committees	-	7	7 ^B	-

Source: Central Government and Provincial Councils

1.3.2.3 Urban local level

The proportion of female members in the Municipal Councils and the Urban Councils stood at only 2.3 percent and 1.4 percent respectively as at 30.6.2000, as shown in Table 10. So far there have been only three women-mayors, in Kandy, Jaffna and Nuwara-Eliya, although there are none at the moment.

^A - Excludes the President and the Prime Minister who are females. The President holds the portfolio of Finance too.

^B - Excludes North-East Provincial Council

1.3.3 Women in decision-making levels in civil/administrative service

Table 12 shows the number of women in decision-making positions in civil/administrative service at central, sub-national and urban local levels as at 30.6.2000. The highest proportions are found in the second, third and fourth positions in the institutions of the central government.

The overall proportion of women in higher positions does not compare well with the proportion of women undergoing university education, which is about 40 percent of the student population in universities. Factors such as difficulties in obtaining domestic help, responsibilities of bringing up children intervening during the period crucial for career development activities and cultural values which restrict the mobility of women have been recognized as constraining women from reaching higher levels in administration, although a large number of women are employed in the private sector and in the lower levels of the public service. However, in recent times women have occupied some high positions such as Commissioner General of Inland Revenue, Director General of External Resources, Director General of National Planning, Post Master General, Director General of the Bribery Commission, Judge of the Court of Appeal and Judge of the Supreme Court among a few others.

Table 12
Decision-making Levels in Civil/Administrative Service at National, Sub-national and Local Levels
Position as at 30.6.2000

Level	Title of Post at Top four Positions	No. of Officers			Females as a % of the Total
		Female	Male	Total	
Central	Secretaries to Ministries	1	34	35	2.8
	Additional Secretaries and Directors General	13	60	73	17.8
	Heads of Departments	53	170	223	23.8
	Deputy Heads of Departments	31	124	155	20.0
Sub-national (Provincial Councils)	Chief Secretaries of Provincial Councils	-	8	8	-
	Secretaries of Provincial Ministries	5	57	62	8.0
	Deputy Secretaries	2	37	39	5.1
	Heads of Provincial Departments	17	125	142	12.0
Urban Local	Municipal Commissioners	1	13	14	7.1
	Deputy Commissioners of Municipal Councils	4	6	10	40.0
	Secretaries and Asst. Secretaries of Municipal Councils	10	19	29	34.0
	Secretaries of Urban Councils	6	31	37	16.2

Source: Ministries and Provincial, Municipal and Urban Councils.

2. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

2.1 Women's participation in urban local government

2.1.1 Laws promoting participation

In Sri Lanka there are no laws that promote women's participation in urban local government. However, the Constitution⁶ stipulates, that no person shall be discriminated on the grounds of sex. It also provides that special provision may be made by law, subordinate legislation or executive action, for the advancement of women, children or disabled persons.

2.1.2 Constraints

Though wide opportunities for education and access to almost all fields of employment have enabled women to take part more and more in social activities, there are several constraints that prevent women from participating equally with men in forums etc. to voice their concerns connected with the affairs of urban local government exist. A study undertaken by the Centre for Women's Research – Sri Lanka, (CENWOR)⁷ has identified, "gender inequality in family relations caused by male dominance and resulting in physical immobility as well as an unequal gender division of labour within the household and consequent time constraints to participation in activities outside the home" as constraints. Women's responsibilities towards the family and caring for children take up much of their time. Another constraint that has been identified in the study is the "gender role assumptions that allocate political and community affairs to men and exclude women from what are perceived to be unsuitable activities for women".

The question of provision of opportunities to women for participation in the affairs of the society received the attention of the Commission of Inquiry on Local Government Reforms⁸ appointed by the President in 1998. The Commission, in order to ensure women's participation in local governance has recommended creation of forums for dialogue between youth and women's sections of the society on the one hand and elected members of councils on the other, compulsory inclusion of competent persons and representatives of youth and women in various committees and provision of opportunities for youth, women and special sections of the people to contest at elections freely and without any restrictions, as it is difficult to provide for their compulsory representation. The Commission has further recommended that representatives elected to local authorities should work with women's organizations and allow for women's contribution to local government.

⁶ Article 12 of Chapter III on Fundamental Rights.

⁷ Centre for Women's Research – Sri Lanka. Women, Political Empowerment and Decision Making, Study Series No. 8-1994

⁸ Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Local Government Reforms – 1999 – Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1999

2.1.3 Initiatives for increasing women's participation in local elections

Initiatives taken by political parties, NGOs, women's associations and other civil society organizations to increase women's participation in local elections and for educating women voters have been marginal so far. However, in all types of elections polling has been high in Sri Lanka and the turn out of female and male voters has been almost the same as pointed out in paragraph 1.3.1 above. Fluctuations of the total number of people casting the vote at different elections, as a percentage of the total number of registered voters has been mainly due to factors peculiar to the relevant periods, such as security problems which affect both the female and the male voter. These high levels of voting have been due to political consciousness of the people (though, no doubt, awareness and their perceptions as to what encompasses political activity are of varying degrees). Thus, a need for special efforts to increase the participation of women in voting itself does not seem to exist.

With regard to the other elements of participation, as stated earlier, efforts undertaken by different organizations have been minimal. In the case of political parties in the country, they have their women's wings and the membership is given a basic political education by the party. But these programmes do not aim particularly to increase women's participation in local politics or elections. It is also to be noted that efforts in this respect by NGOs, are not totally absent. A few, in some parts of the country have launched programmes to increase female participation in all aspects of political activity and have also taken up issues such as prevention of violence at elections.

In activities connected with educating the voters and providing information to them, it is the political parties and some of the advocacy groups that become active, although at election times only. These exercises also do not target women alone but are directed at the entire electorate. Elections in the country generally are keenly contested and election campaigns are intensive ones. Large numbers of election meetings and house-to-house campaigns are held by political parties and their candidates. Press advertisements and radio and television time are made use of to disseminate information to voters. Advocacy groups mainly use the printed media and pamphlets.

2.1.4 Programmes of urban local governments to encourage women to participate in governance.

Programmes undertaken by urban local government institutions to encourage women to participate in governance or to obtain their views for purposes of planning and development too have not been of sufficient magnitude. Only in the case of a very few local authorities have efforts been made to set up women's organizations and only for specific sectors such as environment.

2.2 Gender sensitization

2.2.1 Programmes of government agencies and other organizations to sensitize urban local governments

A small number of NGOs, and a federation of trade unions of local government employees have had a few programmes to sensitize urban local governments with regard to special concerns and needs of women.

However, a fair amount of work is being done in this area particularly by government officials and government agencies involved in local government , and in general administration, namely the Provincial Commissioners of Local Government, the Sri Lanka Institute of Local Governance and the Management Development and Training Units of the Provincial Councils. These exercises have been in the form of segments of training built into the training programmes conducted for elected members of local government institutions and for officials of various grades serving in these institutions. Different aspects pertaining to gender and gender equity form a significant part of the content of these programmes. These training activities are discussed further in paragraph 3.2.1 below.

It is also to be noted that there is a Ministry of Women's Affairs headed by a woman Minister. The mission of this Ministry is to work towards advancement of women through initiating, formulating and monitoring policies, projects and programmes to facilitate mainstreaming of gender equity, ensuring human and fundamental rights with the coordination of public and private sectors, international agencies and NGOs. At sub-national level too, in the Provincial Councils, women's affairs is a function assigned to a Provincial Minister.

2.2.2 Use of sex-disaggregated data

Sex-disaggregated data is used only in an ad hoc manner by urban local government institutions in the country for policy and programme formulation and not routinely and consistently. They are utilized only for projects that address issues mainly concerning women.

3 WOMENS REPRESENTATION IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

3.1 Legal and Political initiatives

3.1.1 Laws that mandate a quota for women's representation

There are no laws that mandate a quota for women's representation in Urban Local Government.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the Commission of Inquiry on Local Government Reforms⁹, state that proposals were made before the Commission that while continuing the provisions for youth representation in local authority elections, there should be provision for women's representation too. The Commission (while recommending that election of representatives to local bodies be held on the basis of the ward system) states that women and youth as categories of voters need not have a fixed percentage of candidates or representatives and that they should be free to contest in any desired numbers. The Commission also notes that any attempt to accommodate a proportion under the ward system would be detrimental to democratic ideals and that if the voters so decided it should be possible for these categories to have even 100 percent representation.

3.1.2 Initiatives to recruit or encourage women to stand in Urban Local Government Elections

Initiatives taken by political parties, non-governmental organizations, women's organizations and other civil society organizations to encourage women to stand in urban local government have been very few. These exercises do not seem to have had much impact.

3.1.3 Special measures taken by the Government to recruit women to civil/administrative service of Urban Local Government and its decision-making positions.

Appointments to positions at higher levels in the civil/administrative service of urban local government are mainly made from the Sri Lanka Administrative Service. In the case of some Urban Councils, due to special circumstances, the posts of Secretary (which post is comparable to the post of Municipal Commissioner with regard to the duties involved) are filled with senior officers from outside the Sri Lanka Administrative Service. As shown in Table 12, currently the number of female Municipal Commissioners is 1 out of a total of 14, 4 female Deputy Municipal Commissioners out of a total of 10 and 6 female Secretaries of Urban Councils out of a total of 37.

⁹ Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Local Government Reforms – Sessional Paper No 1 of 1999

At present there are no barriers for women to enter the Sri Lanka Administrative Service. This service was thrown open to women too in 1963 with the stipulation that the female intake would be limited to 20 percent of the recruits. Later the quota was changed and in 1981 it stood at 25 percent. In 1982 the quota was done away with altogether.

In an environment where both sexes have equal access and opportunities for education and employment special initiatives to recruit women to specified cadres would not seem quite necessary.

3.2 Training and support mechanisms for women in Urban Local Government.

3.2.1 Special measures to train and support women elected or appointed to Urban Local Government.

There are several special programmes implemented by the government for training of women elected to Urban Local Government Institutions as well as women officials attached to them. However, most of these programmes are conducted for both females and males and not targeted for women alone. Political parties, non-government organizations and other civil society organizations do not appear to have undertaken this activity.

An important step taken by the Government in this regard is the establishment of a separate institute – Sri Lanka Institute of Local Governance – as a statutory body by an Act of Parliament in 1999. This institute has been set up as the main arm of the government for training of elected members and officials of local government institutions as well as of the Provincial Councils. Among its functions specified in the Act are the following:

- To provide training to the members and officers and servants of Provincial Councils and local authorities with a view to equipping them to perform their official duties efficiently and effectively.
- To conduct workshops and training courses on Provincial and Local Government Management.
- To assist in the building up of a cadre of competent provincial and local government officers and personnel in the country with a view to ensuring good governance.

The institute commenced functioning in 1999 itself and it has already completed much of the work relating to preparatory activities such as formulation of training modules. During the first six months of 2000 it has held several training programmes in a number of subject areas.

Prior to the setting up of the institute, this work was carried out from the centre through a division in the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government named the Local Government Management Unit and the institute is virtually the successor to this unit. The functions of the unit were more or less similar to those of the new institute in respect of training and during the past years quite a significant amount of work had been done by it.

The Provincial Commissioners of Local Government who function at sub-national level too conduct training for both elected members and officials. In addition, a Management Development and Training Unit functions in each of the Provincial Councils. These units are managed by the Deputy Chief Secretaries of the Provincial Councils. The training given by these units, however, is for officials serving in the Provinces and those attached to local government authorities and not for elected members. During the first six months of 2000 these units and the Provincial Commissioners of Local Government had conducted 131 programmes in different subject areas.

3.2.2 Associations of women elected to, and in civil/administrative service of, Urban Local Government.

Women elected to, and in the civil/administrative service of, urban local government have not formed associations and forums to exchange ideas, to support each other, for lobbying etc. Obviously the number of elected women and women in civil/administrative service being small as revealed in Tables 9 and 10 and the fact that they are dispersed in various parts of the country do not favor the formation and operation of such organizations.

4 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN IN URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

4.1 This section is based on responses given to a questionnaire administered to 18 women in Urban Local Government. Of this number 9 were elected representatives – 6 in Municipal Councils and the other 3 in Urban Councils. The balance 9 were officials in urban local government who were holding the following positions:

Provincial Commissioner of Local Government	2
Municipal Commissioner/Deputy Commissioner	2
Secretary, Municipal Council	2
Secretary, Urban Council	1
Chief Medical Officer, Municipal Council	1
Directress of Sports and Pre-Schools	<u>1</u>
	<u>9</u>

4.2 Background of the respondents.

Table 13 shows the background of the respondents.

Age-wise 5 of the respondents belonged to the 31–40 age group, 5 to the 41–50 group and the balance 8 to the 51–60 group.

As for experience, only 2 of the elected representatives had 8–9 years of experience in urban local governance. The other 7 ranged between 2 and 4 years. Of the officials, 3 had over 10 years of service in the local government sector with one of them having a period of service of 34 years. Three had between 4 and 10 years and the balance three less than 4 years.

Out of the 9 respondents in the category of elected women representatives, one was from the Municipal Council of the capital city of the country while 2 others were from towns adjacent to the city. The balance 6 came from urban local authorities in the outstations. Of the other category of officials, 2 were serving in the capital while the other 7 were attached to urban local authorities or local government offices in the outstations.

Except for one of the elected representatives, all respondents in both the categories were married.

Table 13

Background of Respondents

Variable	Group	No. of Elected Representatives	No. of Officials
Age	31 – 40	3	2
	41 – 50	2	3
	51 – 60	4	4
	Total	9	9
Family Status	Single	1	–
	Married	8	9
	Divorced	–	–
	Widowed	–	–
	Total	9	9
Level of Education	Primary	–	–
	Secondary	7	1
	Tertiary	2	8
	Total	9	9
Occupation ^A	Employed	3	–
	Not in employment	6	–
	Total	9	–
Income Group	Upper	1	3
	Middle	8	6
	Lower	–	–
	Total	9	9

^A Does not apply in the case of officials.

Only 2 of the elected representatives had received tertiary education while the other 7 had received secondary education. In the case of officials 8 had gone up to the tertiary level and the other to the secondary level.

With regard to their employment, 3 of the elected representatives were engaged in occupations – 2 were lawyers and the other the head of a private education institution for children.

One elected representative and 3 of the officials stated that they belonged to the upper income group while the other 10 said that they were in the middle income group.

Four of the elected representatives belonged to families with political backgrounds. Their immediate family members were actively engaged in political work. Two others had close relations or close associates in politics. Of the 3 representatives who did not come from families engaged in politics, 2 were lawyers, a profession through which one constantly comes into contact with people. A large number of politicians in the country belong to this profession. Out of officials 3 had family members employed in the public service.

4.3 Barriers faced in entering Urban Local Government

4.3.1 Elected representatives

Eight out of the 9 elected representatives stated that there are barriers that prevent or restrict women from entering the political arena in urban local government.

According to their perceptions with regard to these constraints, they arise out of an amalgam of reasons – burdens of management of the household, traditional attitudes prevalent in the society as to the role of women, intimidation including counter-propaganda involving character assassination and male dominance.

A majority of respondents stated that women are required to shoulder responsibilities of motherhood, of caring for children, helping the husband in his day-to-day activities and managing the other affairs of the household leaving little or no time to participate in political activity. This is clearly a manifestation of the nature of role customarily assigned to women by the society at large and also the outcome of unequal division of work in the household. Coupled with this is the view expressed by four of the respondents that the society considers politics as territory not suitable for women or that they are dissuaded by their elders from participating in political activity. Male dominance and the tendency for the society to focus criticism on the activities of women more, than on the activities of men were also cited. Vulnerability of women to imputations made by opponents which harm the character, intimidation and political violence were the other factors considered to be preventing females from embarking on political activity.

In order to remedy this situation, the respondents felt that what was needed was gender sensitization, to educate the society, the women and the males. They considered it necessary to conduct programmes aimed at the society and the males to make them aware of the dual role of women in the society and of the need for women to enter the field of politics, to give equal status to women and to change the traditional role entrusted to women within the family and the household. They also thought it necessary to bring about political awareness among women through similar educational programmes.

4.3.2 Officials appointed to urban local government

The officials interviewed did not consider that barriers existed for women to prevent them from entering service in the area of urban local government. This obviously is owing to the equal opportunities that both sexes have in the field of education and employment.

4.4 Contribution from family to enter urban local government

Encouragement given by family members and also by others seem to have facilitated a majority of the elected representatives to enter local politics¹⁰.

Of the 9 elected representatives 5 had been either actively encouraged to enter urban local government by a parent, husband or some other member of the family or been inspired by a relative or a close associate. These relatives and associates had been holding elected office at local level or been active supporters of the political parties they were affiliated to. Of the other 4, 2 had been encouraged by politicians who held positions at national level.

At the other end of the scale was one respondent who stated that her immediate family members showed displeasure at her being away from home at unusual times attending to political and social work.

4.5 Difficulties faced

Being female had not posed problems to almost all the respondents in the process of their election or appointment. While all the 9 elected representatives stated that being a woman did not create any obstacles, of the 9 officials one stated that at the time she was to be appointed to her present position there were

¹⁰ This aspect is not relevant in the case of respondents who are officials in decision – making positions as personnel to such posts are drawn mainly from the Sri Lanka Administrative Service as discussed in paragraph 3.1.3 above.

objections to the effect that a female would not be capable of discharging the responsibilities of the post.

However, once in office, 3 of the elected women faced difficulties or discrimination from their colleagues. These appear to have stemmed from the traditional perception that women are “weak”, resulting in male dominance. These difficulties that they had to face had come in the form of arrogance, rough behaviour or intentional disregard on the part of male colleagues. One other respondent had found that her family members were unhappy when she was away at unusual hours attending to her work.

None of the 9 women officials had faced any discrimination after appointment to their positions.

4.6 Transformative role of women in Urban Local Government

4.6.1. Achieving gender equity : Action proposed

4.6.1.1 Awareness creation

A majority of the respondents – all the 9 elected representatives and 7 of the 9 officials – felt that lack of awareness, both among women and in the society in general, prevented women from participating in political activity at all levels and also in the affairs of the society. They perceived that this lack of awareness was in relation to the place due to women in the society and in the political process and the potential that women had for rendering service to the community through political activities.

These respondents thought that conducting awareness programmes should be a major strategy to remedy this situation and that action in that direction was a responsibility cast upon women leaders in the society. Such programmes should take the form of seminars and group discussions and should be designed to bring about attitudinal changes that would release women from the traditional and conventional roles that have been assigned to them, bring about equitable division of work in the household, create political awareness in women and make them and the society in general conscious of their potential for political work.

4.6.1.2 Income generating activities

Most of the respondents also stated that promotion of self employment and other income generating activities among women was necessary to increase their status in the society. This too, they stated, was the responsibility of women leaders and that they should endeavor to provide women with training in skills, introduce them to the supply system and mobilize outside support for them. Increasing family

incomes was seen as an important means of facilitating upward mobility in the society.

4.6.1.3 Other strategies

Several other steps were also identified as necessary measures for achieving gender equity. These included advocacy to highlight gender issues, formation of women's groups for collective action, assisting women to acquire skills of articulating their views and identification of individual women with capability and dedication for community work and introducing them to various levels in the political establishment.

4.7. Inclusiveness: Working with the people

Evidently the concerns of the elected representatives interviewed were more in matters that affected the people in their daily lives and they preferred to concentrate more on action programmes that directly impacted on physical well-being and the social status of the members of the community. The officials, while emphasizing the need for such an approach were naturally concerned, unlike the elected representatives, on the regulatory functions of their local authorities. However all were influenced by a desire to engage in development oriented approaches and to work alongside the people rather than direct affairs from afar in a remote way. In fact, what had initially motivated a majority of the elected category as well as the officials to enter the field of local government was their wish to be of service to the people.

In translating their views to action in the aspect of upliftment of the conditions of women in their localities they had undertaken diverse activities and contributed to it in various ways. Several of them had organized women's groups or organizations as forums to discuss and air women's problems, to safeguard women's rights or to assist them to venture into income earning activities. Programmes on training of skills had been implemented and the beneficiaries had been provided with other necessary assistance to embark on economic activities.

For the benefit of the general population in their areas, their approach had led them to initiate or actively support public utility services such as provision of water, sanitary facilities, housing and drainage, and community services such as provision of libraries and playgrounds. Organization of labour camps, implementation of health programmes for women and children and action on conservation of environment had been some of the other areas.

In all these activities what is apparent was that promotion of organized participation and facilitation of the participation of vulnerable groups had been attempted.

4.8 Contribution to Governance

Thirteen of the 18 respondents were of the view that their work in the positions they hold had resulted in changes in their local government institutions for the better in certain aspects.

Several of them felt that they had been able to make the administration of their institutions more efficient and that it had resulted in the services being made available to the people more expeditiously than before. Three of the respondents stated that their contribution had enabled the respective local authorities to obtain the participation of the people, specially women, in carrying out their functions while two stated that their institutions paid attention to environmental matters more.

4.9 Sensitivity to people's needs and efficiency

In the case of elected representatives who were interviewed, the nature of their responsibilities as they saw them and the changes that they thought had occurred due to their being in urban local government were indicative of the degree of their sense of sensitivity to the needs of the people. Almost all of them thought that their main responsibility was to attend to the daily needs, of their constituents, relating to public utility services and community services. Two of the representatives whose local authority areas had problems peculiar to their localities, sea erosion and periodical floods, gave priority to re-settlement of the victims of such disasters and provision of their basic needs.

Many of the respondents also felt that their contribution to local governance had made the administration in their local government institutions more efficient which meant that these institutions had gained capacity to attend to the needs of the people within a reasonable time.

The appointed officials have the duties and responsibilities attached to their posts stipulated. Yet their sensitivity to issues around them is evidenced by the work they have performed in the areas of sensitizing people to gender issues and organizing women and also their endeavors to make the administration of the local authorities more efficient to respond to the needs of the people.

Most of the respondents believed that women are more concerned than men about aspects such as health, cleanliness, water, sanitation, housing conditions of the public and the environment and that it was due to the influence of the nature of work that they usually have to attend in their homes in bringing up children and managing the household. They, therefore, felt that increasing the number of women in local governance could cause the local government institutions to become more responsive and effective and that it would, in turn, have a positive effect on the status of women in general.

5. ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

- 5.1. Organizations that are active or could potentially become active in promoting, training or supporting the participation of women in urban local government in Sri Lanka.

(Note: This is not a comprehensive list. There is a large number of non-government and civic organizations in Sri Lanka engaged in related fields of activity and a list of such organizations is not readily available to pick out the relevant ones.

This list contains only the few organizations which could be identified and particulars obtained within a short space of time)

5.1.1 Government Organizations

1. Name : Sri Lanka Institute of Local Governance
Contact Person : Mr A.P. Dainis, Director
Address : 87, Horton Place, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.
Telephone : 94 1 687512/696947 Fax : 94 1 697023
E-mail : mpclgmu@slt.lk

The mission of the Institute is to be the foremost national agency in local governance for building capacity of sub national (Regional/Provincial) and local government institutions through advocacy, training, research and consultancy services towards upliftment of the quality of life of the people.

2. Name : Management Development and Training Unit, Western Province.
Contact Person : Mrs. A.H. Jayaweera, Deputy Chief Secretary
Address : Chief Secretary's Office, Western Provincial Council, Srawasthi Mandiraya, Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha., Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.
Telephone : 94 1 693952 Fax : 94 1 694667

3. Name : Management Development and Training Unit, North Western Province.
- Contact Person : Mr. Sampath M. Dasanayaka, Deputy Chief Secretary
- Address : Chief Secretary's Office, North Western Provincial Council, Kurunegala, Sri Lanka.
- Telephone : 94 37 28019 Fax : 94 37 23655

The mission is creation of an effective, efficient, quality conscious, customer responsive and self reliant public service dedicated to ushering a better quality of life to the people of the North Western Province.

4. Name : Management Development and Training Unit, Central Province.
- Contact Person : Mr. H.R. Wijesiri, Deputy Chief Secretary
- Address : Chief Secretary's Office, Central Provincial Council, Kandy, Sri Lanka.
- Telephone : 94 8 222233 Fax : 94 8 223418

The mission is the creation of an efficient and quality conscious customer responsive public service dedicated to ushering a better quality of life to the people of the Province.

5. Name : Management Development and Training Unit, Southern Province.
- Contact Person : Mr. S.R. Wickramaratne, Deputy Chief Secretary
- Address : Chief Secretary's Office, Southern Provincial Council, S.M. Dahanayaka Avenue, Richmond Hill, Galle, Sri Lanka.
- Telephone : 94 9 22603/34052 Fax : 94 9 46298

The mission is to establish a strong Provincial Public Service enriched with knowledge, attitudes and talents required to face the challenges of the 21st Century successfully, by providing training, consultancy services, information and research.

6. Name : Management Development and Training Department,
North East Province.
Contact Person : Mr. V.S. Swaminathan, Director, MDT Department
Address : No. 59, Huskison Street, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.
Telephone/Fax : 94 26 22615

The mission of the department is to provide a learning environment and other related assistance to the public sector institutions, NGOs and managers to develop knowledge, skills and behaviour towards increasing productivity and to strengthen a competency based, efficient and effective Provincial Public Service.

7. Name : Management Development and Training Unit, North
Central Province.
Contact Person : Mr. R.M.S.B. Ratnayake, Deputy Chief Secretary
Address : Chief Secretary's Office, North Central Provincial
Council, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.
Telephone : 94 25 24914 Fax : 94 25 22736

The mission is to contribute towards establishing an efficient and productive Provincial Public Service by assisting the public servants to develop proper attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to provide an efficient service to the people.

8. Name : Management Development and Training Unit, Uva
Province.
Contact Person : Mr. S.D. Pathirana, Deputy Chief Secretary
Address : Chief Secretary's Office, Uva Provincial Council,
Badulla, Sri Lanka.
Telephone/Fax : 94 55 22203

The mission is creation of a productive and efficient Provincial Public Service by development of its human resources.

9. Name : Management Development and Training Unit,
Sabaragamuwa Province.
Contact Person : Mr. J.G.A. Wijedasa, Deputy Chief Secretary
Address : Chief Secretary's Office, Sabaragamuwa Provincial
Council, Ratnapura, Sri Lanka.
Telephone : 94 45 23080 Fax : 94 45 23052

The mission is the development of human resources and effective management in the Provincial Council and in the State sector of the Province to ensure an efficient and effective Public Service for satisfactory delivery of services to the public of the Province.

10. Name : Local Government Training Centre
Contact Person : Mr. M.A. Abeyratne, Assistant Commissioner
Address : Nawayalatenna, Katugastota, Sri Lanka.
Telephone : 94 8 497252

The mission is to contribute towards establishment of an effective and productive local government service in the Central Province by assisting the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes of the members and the officials of the local authorities.

5.1.2 Non - Governmental Organizations

1. Name : Women's Development Centre
Contact Person : Ms. Pearl Stephen, Co-ordinator
Address : 61, Mulgampola Road, Kandy, Sri Lanka
Telephone : 94 8 234511, 94 8 228158 Fax – 94 8 234511
E-mail : wdc@slt.lk

The major programme areas of this organization are crisis intervention for women, community development for women, rehabilitation and networking and liaison.

2. Name : Sarvodaya Women's Movement
Contact Person : Ms. Mallika Jagoda, General Secretary
Address : 32, Rawatawatta Road, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
Telephone and Fax : 94 1 647348
E-mail : swm.am.mal.@itmin.com
- The major programme areas of the organization are skill training for self employment, rehabilitation, financial assistance, gender sensitization etc for women.
3. Name ; Women in Media Collective
Contact Person : Ms. Kumudhini Samuel
Dr. Sepali Kottegoda
Ms. Sunila Abeysekera
Address : 12 1/1, Ascot Avenue, Colombo 5, Sri Lanka
Telephone : 94 01 597738/595224 Fax – 94 1 595224
E-mail : womedia@sri.lanka.net
- The objectives of the organization are to evolve a feminist perspective on discrimination against women etc. and to act as an advocacy and pressure group to influence state and other relevant institutions towards law and policy reform in keeping with this perspective and to act in collaboration with other like-minded women's groups, human rights groups and individuals.
4. Name : Rural Women's Organizations Network
Contact Person : Mrs. Manel Tiranagama, President, RWON
Address : 329 b, Boralugoda, Athurugiriya, Sri Lanka
Telephone : 94-1-562479 Fax – 94-1-687665
E-mail : thrd@dynaweb.lk
- The objectives of the organization are,
- i. Mobilising women and their families in rural villages through awareness raising.
 - ii. Education and consciousness raising of rural women on their rights and the nature of the social role to establish a better social order, free from oppression and exploitation.

- iii. Establishing relations of mutual cooperation with national and international organizations of women which stand for social justice and emancipation of women.
- iv. Guiding rural women to play their due role in the struggle for improving their living conditions.

5. Name : Women's Desk, Lawyers for Human Rights and Development
Contact Person : Ms. Hasanthi Ratnayake,
Address : 225 1/1, Cotta Road, Colombo 08, Sri Lanka.
Telephone : 94-1-686 180 Fax – 94-1-687 665
E-mail : thrd@dynaweb.lk

The objectives of the organization are,

- i. Educating people of their legal and human rights and the available relief and remedies for the violation thereof.
- ii. Assisting people in protecting and seeking recognition of their human rights and securing their effective enforcement.
- iii. Providing legal aid to those groups and communities whose human and legal rights are violated or threatened with violation.
- iv. Promoting and protecting the rights of such vulnerable groups as women and children.

6. Name : Community Development Research & Training Institute
Contact Person : Mrs. Chandra Rathnayake, Director / Training
Address : Jayanthi Mawatha, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka
Telephone and Fax : 94 25 35140

The main activities of the organization are, awareness building programmes, financial management assistance, credit facilities, social welfare work, research & training.

7. Name : Sri Lanka Canada Development Fund
Contact Person : Mr. W.P.P. Abeydeera, Programme Director
Address : 141/2, Vajira Road, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka
Telephone : 94 1 508435, 94 1 584883 Fax 94 1 584883
E-mail : slcdf@slt.lk
This is a programme of South Asia Partnership (SAP) where it provides development support to mid-sized NGOs for capacity building of local NGOs, gender and development, environment, good governance, NGO/GO/Private sector collaboration and providing funds for development projects of poverty alleviation

8. Name : Sri Lanka Women's NGO Forum
Contact Person : Dr. Sepali Kottegoda
Address : 121/1 Ascot Avenue, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka
Telephone : 94 1 597738 , 94 1 595224 Fax 94 1 595224
E-mail : sepali@sri.lanka.net
The objectives of the organization are to coordinate, liaise, network and lobby with local, national, regional and international organizations in order to promote:
- implementation of the Platform for Action and the UN Declaration at Beijing during the Fourth World Conference on Women.
- the advancement of the status of women within a non-sexist, non-racist framework.

9. Name : Participatory Institute for Development Alternatives
Contact Person : Mr. Wilfred Karunaratne
Address : 32, Gotami Lane, Colombo 08, Sri Lanka
Telephone : 94 1 687270, 94 74 302120
Fax – 94 1 673373, 94 74 302120
E-mail : pidagrc@lanka.ccom.lk
The objectives of the organization are -
i. To study the social and economic impact of the development process and to explore alternative approaches.
ii. To initiate and participate in development actions aimed at changing the process of development in favor of economically and socially disadvantaged groups.

- iii. To support and strengthen organizations emerging out of such development actions.
- iv. To undertake and promote studies relating to development actions and
- v. To undertake and promote the training of initiators for participatory and self-reliant development processes.

10. Name : South Asia Partnership Sri Lanka
Contact Person : Dr. Padma Ratnayake, Executive Director
Address : 6, Sakvithi Lane, Colombo 06, Sri Lanka
Telephone : 94 1 504201 Fax - 94 1 201102
E-mail : sapsri@slt.lk

The organization is a member of a consortium comprising six countries, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Canada and Sri Lanka.

The main objectives of the organization are serving the less privileged, particularly women, in urban & rural areas, initiation and implementation of integrated development projects, gender sensitization, promotion of women's participation in the political process and governance.

11. Name : Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR)
Contact Person : Prof. Swarna Jayaweera, Jt. Co-ordinator
Ms. Kamalini Wijayatilaka, Board Member
Address : 225/4, Kirula Road, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka
Telephone : 94 1 502153, 94 1 502828, 94 1 556530
Fax – 94 1 502153, 94 1 502828
E-mail : cenwor@slt.lk , cenwor@panlanka.net

The objectives of the CENWOR are to facilitate the realization of the full potential of women in achieving equality in all spheres of life.

5.2 List of Individuals

5.2.1 Elected women at decision – making levels

1.Name : Mrs. Nalin Thilaka Herath

Address : Member, Nuwara-Eliya Municipal Council, Nuwara-Eliya, Sri Lanka.

Telephone No. : 94-52-22275

Position : Member of Municipal Council

2. Name : Mrs. Sunetha Wickramasinghe

Address : Member, Colombo Municipal Council, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Telephone No : 94-1-691190

Position : Member of Municipal Council

3. Name : Mrs. M. Nalinee Fernando

Address : Member, Moratuwa Municipal Council, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka

Telephone No : 94-1-638158

Position : Member of Municipal Council

4. Name : Mrs. V.Samanmalie Gunasinghe

Address : Member, Dehiwala-Mt.Lavinia Municipal Council, Dehiwala, Sri Lanka

Telephone No : 94-1-739198

Position : Member of Municipal Council

5. Name : Mrs. Ummu Thabiya Abdeen

Address : Member, Dehiwala-Mt.Lavinia Municipal Council, Dehiwala, Sri Lanka

Telephone No : 94-1-739198

Position : Member of Municipal Council

6. Name : Mrs. T.D. Gunawathi

Address : Member, Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte Municipal Council,
Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte, Sri Lanka.

Telephone No: 94 1 862555

Position : Member of Municipal Council

7. Name : Miss. W.Nilanie

Address : Member, Ambalangoda Urban Council, Ambalangoda, Sri Lanka

Telephone No : 94-9-58275

Position : Member of Municipal Council

8. Name : Mrs. Upulangani Malagamuwa

Address. : Member, Kurunegala Municipal Council, Kurunegala, Sri Lanka

Telephone No : 94-37-26660

Position : Member of Municipal Council

9. Name : Ms. J. Logeshwari

Address : Member, Pt. Pedro Urban Council, Pt.Pedro, Sri Lanka

Position : Member of Urban Council

10. Name : Mrs. K.A.C. Punya Kanthi Jayasinghe

Address : Member, Haputale Urban Council, Haputale, Sri Lanka

Telephone No. 94-57-6810

Position : Member of Urban Council

11. Name : Ms. R.M.Janaranjani Siyambalapitiya

Address : Member, Kegalle Urban Council, Kegalle, Sri Lanka

Telephone No : 94-35-22297

Position : Member of Urban Council

12. Name : Ms. Champa Nilika Kalugalla

Address : Member, Kegalle Urban Council, Kegalle, Sri Lanka

Telephone No : 94-35-65113

Position : Member of Urban Council

5.2.2 Appointed women at decision making levels

1. Name : Mrs Jayantha C.T. Bulumulla
Address : Municipal Commissioner, Kandy Municipal Council,
Kandy, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No : 94-8-223921
Position : Municipal Commissioner

2. Name : Mrs.M.P.M.Kariyawasam
Address : Deputy Municipal Commissioner, Kurunegala Municipal
Council, Kurunegala, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No : 94-37-22274
Position : Deputy Municipal Commissioner

3. Name : Mrs. M.N.S. Angamma
Address : Deputy Municipal Commissioner, Moratuwa Municipal
Council, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No : 94-1-645251
Position : Deputy Municipal Commissioner

4. Name : Mrs. K.V. Indrani Mallika
Address : Deputy Municipal Commissioner, Municipal Council,
Sri Jeyewardenepura Kotte, Sri Lanka
Telephone No : 94-1-888098
Position : Deputy Municipal Commissioner

5. Name : Mrs. T.N. Kumarasinghe
Address : Municipal Secretary, Dehiwala Mt. Lavinia Municipal
Council, Dehiwala, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No : 94-1-738701
Position : Secretary of Municipal Council

6. Name : Mrs. B.G. Dharmawathie
Address : Secretary, Galle Municipal Council, Galle, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No: 94-9-34091
Position : Secretary of Municipal Council

7. Name : Mrs.W.J.Abeygunawardane
Address : Secretary, Badulla Municipal Council, Badulla
Sri Lanka
Telephone No: 94 55 22274
Position : Secretary of Municipal Council

8. Name : Mrs. Manel P. Dharmadasa
Address : Assistant Secretary, Colombo Municipal Council,
Colombo, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No: 94-1-691190
Position : Assistant Secretary of Municipal Council

9. Name : Mrs. K.H.I. Jayasinghe
Address : Assistant Secretary, Colombo Municipal Council,
Colombo, Sri Lanka
Telephone No: 94-1-691190
Position : Assistant Secretary of Municipal Council

10. Name : Mrs. M.D.M.D. Karunatilleke
Address : Assistant Secretary, Colombo Municipal Council,
Colombo, Sri Lanka
Telephone No: 94-1-691190
Position : Assistant Secretary of Municipal Council

11. Name : Mrs. M.A. Karunawathie
Address : Administrative Officer, Ratnapura Municipal Council,
Ratnapura, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No: 94-45-22275
Position : Administrative Officer of Municipal Council

12. Name : Mrs. Bhadrani Jayewardene
Address : Secretary, Anuradhapura Urban Council, Anuradhapura,
Sri Lanka.
Telephone No: 94-25-22276
Position : Secretary of Urban Council
13. Name : Mrs. A.B. Karunawathie
Address : Secretary, Thalawakele Urban Council, Thalawakele,
Sri Lanka.
Telephone No : 94-52-58275
Position : Secretary of Urban Council
14. Name : Mrs. D.S.K.D. Kiriwandeniya
Address : Secretary, Kadugannawa Urban Council, Kadugannawa,
Sri Lanka.
Telephone No: 94-8-571275
Position : Secretary of Urban Council
15. Name : Mrs. N.V.P. Nainangala
Address : Secretary, Matara Urban Council, Matara, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No: 94-41-22275
Position : Secretary of Urban Council
16. Name : Mrs. S.B. Amarasekera
Address : Secretary, Ampara Urban Council, Ampara, Sri Lanka.
Telephone No: 94-63-22403
Position : Secretary of Urban Council

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ACTION

6.1 Reforming urban local government to make it gender balanced.

6.1.1 For achieving gender balance in urban local authorities, it will be necessary for legal provision to be made to ensure representation of women in them. This would involve the stipulation of the following :

- A percentage of women representatives in urban local government institutions, under the present system of proportional representation.
- Inclusion of a quota of women representatives of non-government organizations and other civic organizations in the respective areas, in committees to be set up by urban local government institutions for management purposes. It is to be noted that at present the law stipulates that the Municipal Councils should appoint a Standing Committee on Finance and not less than two other committees. With regard to the Urban Councils the law does not specify the number of committees to be appointed or make it compulsory to appoint committees.

6.2 Steps needed for promoting the role of women in urban local government.

6.2.1 Steps that have to be taken to promote women's participation in urban local government evidently are awareness creation and elimination of existing obstacles that prevent them from venturing into an active role in political and community activities. This would entail the following:

- Awareness creation in order to,
 - conscientize men and women to the reality that women have the potential to give leadership and to contribute to the realization of the aspirations of the community, that women have equal rights and that public life is not the exclusive domain of the males,
 - to make them realize that various role assumptions have resulted in situations such as unfair and unequal division of work in the household generally relegating women to a

subservient position and caused barriers such as time constraints, and

- to educate women on political issues.

These awareness programmes have to be undertaken and actively supported by government agencies, non-government organizations and other civil organizations, political parties and by local authorities themselves.

- Facilitation of women by providing services such as child-care.
- Assisting women to form organizations and to strengthen them for advocacy, lobbying, economic activities etc.
- Enhancing the earning capacity of women through training in skills, entrepreneurship etc. to ensure independent sources of income in order to relieve them of dependency on family members.